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Latin America Review

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Recent bickering among top leaders of the opposition Jamaica Labor Party has slowed the party's campaign to oust Prime Minister Manley and have decreased the likelihood of a near term election; nevertheless, trends still favor the rise of the opposition and Manley's continued decline.

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Cuban Chronology for January 1979

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Cuba: Looking to the Nonaligned Summit

The Castro regime in recent weeks has continued to demonstrate that it sees the nonaligned movement's summit in Havana in September as one of the most promising opportunities of the decade to enhance the regime's prestige and improve Cuba's influence in the eyes of the world's superpowers. To promote the event's success, Havana is exhibiting surprising flexibility in presummit politicking with other movement members. What is missing, however, is any indication that the desire to achieve Cuban goals at the summit will induce Castro to compromise what he views as revolutionary principles. The withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola or Ethiopia, for example, will be determined more by immediate tactical realities than by political considerations, although Castro would make political capital in the nonaligned movement if conditions in either of the African countries permitted a reduction of Cuban forces.

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Diplomatic Offensive

1, 2, 3 Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca, who returned home in December after visiting seven nonaligned countries was on the road again by mid-January on a trip that climaxed at the end of the month in Maputo, Mozambique, at the ministerial meeting of the nonaligned movement's Coordinating Bureau. Seven other top Cuban Foreign Ministry officials were on similar missions in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. None of the eight travelers--not even Malmierca--is a member of the decisionmaking elite in Havana, indicating that they served primarily as messengers--delivering invitations, explaining Cuban policy, and sounding out their hosts on key issues. Their travels nevertheless underscore the importance Cuba attaches to maximum attendance at the summit--especially by as many chiefs of state as possible--to submerging contentious issues that might derail the summit, and to keeping lines of communication open to prevent the polarization of the movement.

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Havana is leaving the door open for all members of the nonaligned movement to attend, even such ideological enemies as Zaire, Somalia, and Egypt. The Cubans realize that their pretensions to Third World leadership--and Castro's personal image as well--would suffer if a significant number of nonaligned members were to boycott the summit. Moreover, this would threaten nonaligned unity, and a fragmented movement would be much less useful to Castro during the three years--1979-82--he will serve as the movement's chairman. [REDACTED]

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1, 2, 3, 4
Where no formal ties exist, Havana is trying to establish them. Where ties exist but diplomatic missions have not been exchanged, the Cubans are promoting resident embassies, offering the incentives of trade and technical assistance and help in solving host countries' problems with their neighbors. [REDACTED]

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The Nonaligned Movement's Importance to Cuba

Although Castro covets the prestige of the movement's chairmanship and relishes the opportunity to assume a high profile on the world stage, his interest in the nonaligned movement is more practical. As the leader of a small nation that views itself trapped in a super-power environment, he sees an alliance of small countries as a promising alternative to close alignment with either of the superpowers. While Castro realizes that Cuba's ability to achieve greater independence from Moscow is limited, he expects activist Cuban participation in the movement to provide him greater leverage in his relations with the USSR. Mindful of the divisiveness inherent in multilateral relationships, he believes he can provide the dynamic leadership that the movement needs to press successfully the demands of the "have nots." [REDACTED]

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The Cubans, nevertheless, have no illusions about the differences that threaten the movement's unity. Their plan appears to call for focusing on issues all members can support, while deemphasizing more fractious matters. On issues that defy resolution, Havana apparently will advocate quiet, private negotiations. [REDACTED]

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The "Soviet-Surrogate" Issue

Havana's close links to Moscow have posed a persistent embarrassment for it in nonaligned councils. When Castro tried to promote the USSR as an ally of the nonaligned nations during his address at the Algiers summit in 1973, Libya's Qadhafi walked out and Prince Sihanouk angrily interrupted Castro in midsentence. Cuba's awareness of its vulnerability was reinforced at the time of the Colombo summit in 1976 when Castro, in the wake of Cuba's Angolan intervention, decided not to head the Cuban delegation. Instead, he sent his chief foreign policy adviser to parry charges that Cuba was a Soviet surrogate. [REDACTED]

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1, 2 Malmierca ran into the issue again in Yugoslavia on the first stop of his latest trip. His efforts to elicit Belgrade's support--or at least agreement to remain silent--regarding the Vietnamese-imposed regime in Kampuchea appear to have done nothing but reinforce Yugoslav convictions that Havana is a Soviet pawn. The Yugoslav Foreign Secretary, at a dinner in Malmierca's honor, condemned "hegemony"--read Soviet domination--and blasted foreign interference and intervention, a clear reference to the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea. The Kampuchean affair also threatens to resurrect the specter of Soviet surrogates achieving Moscow's goals through naked aggression, an image the Cubans have been trying to dispel since their own interventions in Angola and Ethiopia.

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The "surrogate" issue promises to remain a source of serious friction up to and through the summit. The Cubans are unlikely to repeat their gaffe made at the 1973 Algiers summit, but they can hardly divest themselves entirely of the puppet label, given their military and economic dependence on the USSR and their close cooperation with Moscow on such matters as Angola, Ethiopia, and Kampuchea. Moreover, if one of the Cuban "astronauts" now training in the USSR were to take part in a joint space event prior to the summit, the result could be the reverse of that intended; rather than boosting Cuban prestige, the event could cement the impression of Cuba as a Soviet stooge. [REDACTED]

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Other Hazards

Another peril on Havana's road to the summit is the succession question in Algeria. The late Algerian President Houari Boumediene personally salvaged Castro's pride in 1973 when the Cuban leader was openly insulted at the summit. While the Algerians have been providing logistical assistance in preparation for the summit, the Cubans are clearly uncertain about the amount of support they can now count on from the country that has been one of their firmest allies within the movement.

The possibility of the demise of 86-year-old President Tito and the detrimental impact it could have on nonaligned unity may also concern Havana. More importantly, however, the Cubans would probably look upon Tito's passing as the fortuitous elimination of a source of competition to Castro and an opportunity to redirect the movement's aims leftward without having to contend with the criticism of a prestigious "elder statesman."

Outlook

The fate of the 1979 summit has yet to be decided. Although its opening in Havana will be a victory of sorts for the Castro regime, its success is by no means guaranteed. Much will depend on the Cubans' ability over the next seven months to quell explosive issues that have the potential of seriously dividing the movement. They are probably counting heavily on the reluctance of many members to press their respective positions to the point of endangering the movement's unity.

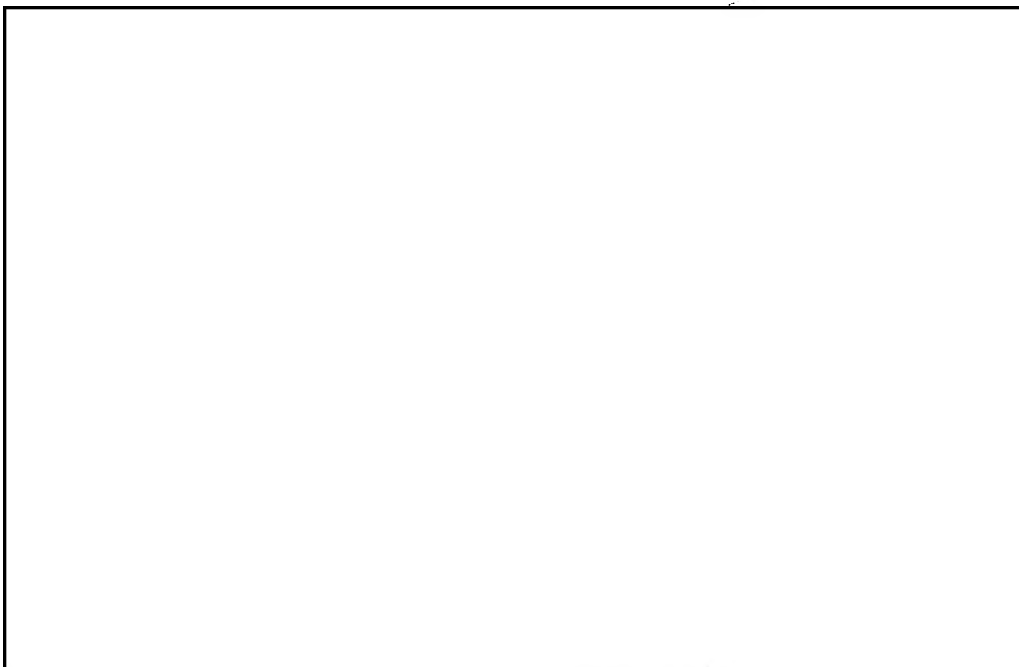
Much as the Cubans want a showcase summit, we believe they are prepared--in the unlikely event of an irreconcilable confrontation in September--to maintain an adamant stance on issues of principle even at the cost of splitting the movement. Cuba could be expected to risk provoking the ouster of some members from the movement, because it believes the majority is willing to suffer the withdrawal of a few pro-Western states rather than see the movement collapse entirely. If forced to choose, the Cubans probably would opt for such a radicalized movement.

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Jamaica: Opposition Infighting

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Recent serious bickering among top leaders of the opposition Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) has slowed the party's increasingly effective campaign to oust Prime Minister Michael Manley. Trends still strongly favor the JLP and point to Manley's continued decline, but chances for an election in the near term have decreased.

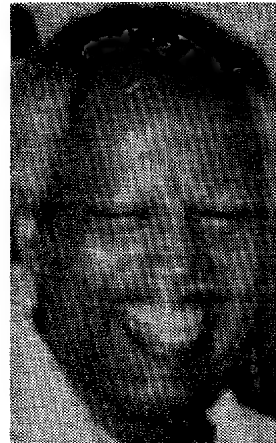
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Opposition Crisis

The leader of the JLP, Edward Seaga, exposed the infighting late last month by "conditionally" resigning his party post less than two weeks after he led the most



JPL leader Edward Seaga



Former Prime Minister
Hugh Shearer

successful antigovernment demonstrations in the seven years of Manley's rule. Seaga apparently calculated that the inevitable widespread clamor for his return would greatly weaken the position of his longstanding and troublesome rival, Hugh Shearer, a former prime minister and popular party leader. Shearer, who heads the JLP's politically indispensable trade union affiliate, angered Seaga because he was not among the majority of opposition union officials actively supporting the demonstrations.

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3,4
Seaga's power play has probably strengthened his hand among party regulars and decreased chances of a comeback by Shearer. The party leader has not succeeded, however, in bringing under his thumb either the independent Shearer or the powerful union. Seaga withdrew his resignation on 31 January apparently without achieving any of the concessions [redacted] demanded from Shearer. [redacted]

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Legacy of Friction

4
Differences between Seaga and Shearer date from the early 1960s and stem largely from their contrasting political styles and bases of support. Seaga, who served as Shearer's respected economics minister, is a shrewd political organizer and a hardworking technocrat whose cold and calculating manner has not been a political asset among the large Jamaican working class. A wealthy Boston-born white man of Lebanese descent, he has nonetheless held for 16 years the parliamentary seat from one of the country's poorest and blackest constituencies--a seat previously contested and lost by the Afro-Jamaican Shearer. [redacted]

4
Shearer, on the other hand, is an outgoing politician with great personal appeal and a solid base of support among organized labor. Despite his natural abilities, he was an increasingly ineffective prime minister and a mediocre political tactician whose serious mistakes helped boost the less-popular Seaga to the top spot in the JLP. Although still widely admired, Shearer would probably lose much of his support if he now tried openly to topple Seaga. [redacted]

4
Shearer's antipathy toward Seaga was probably firmly set in 1974 when strong criticism of Shearer's stewardship, especially among the private sector, forced him to give up the party leadership. Shearer had led the JLP to defeat in 1972--nearly losing his own seat--and to even greater losses in the local elections of 1974. Rather than support his beleaguered leader in a difficult period, Seaga hastened Shearer's departure by suddenly quitting his key party post--perhaps setting the precedent for his recent decision--and merely awaiting the inevitable call to succession. [redacted]

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4
Seaga's latest resignation has scuttled a JLP-sponsored myth that the two men had reached a truce for the sake of party unity and a near-term election victory. Although the JLP has become an increasingly well-organized opposition with an excellent chance of defeating Manley, its leaders have not been prepared to mount an effective election campaign.

Prospects

4
Manley has been helped by the JLP's problems and will try hard to exploit them. He is personally hostile toward Seaga and would strongly prefer the more cooperative Shearer as opposition leader and--if the JLP must win--as the next prime minister. Shearer and Manley--who are rumored to be distant cousins--were for 20 years friendly rivals when they headed the country's two largest unions.



Kingston Press Cartoon on Seaga's resignation

4
Despite Manley's hopes, there is now little chance for a change in the JLP's top leadership or for a showdown between Seaga and Shearer. Seaga has had to take time away from his antigovernment campaign to mend party fences, but his overall prospects are good and improving. Present trends favor the election of the JLP even if that party must continually reconcile the differences between an authoritarian technocrat and a proud labor boss.

4
Manley, on the other hand, faces serious economic difficulties that could still force him to call an election before the end of his term in 1981. Jamaicans blame him for the sharp economic decline under his administration and for the strict International Monetary Fund - inspired austerity that is almost certain to continue for the next several years. The JLP rift has bought Manley time, but it has not provided his troubled government with new solutions.

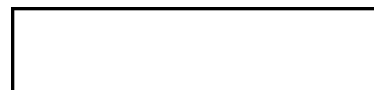
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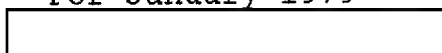
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CUBAN CHRONOLOGY

For January 1979



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- 1 January A special People's Government National Assembly Session is held to mark the 20th anniversary of the Cuban revolution. Fidel Castro's address to the session contains his strongest criticism of the Carter administration.
- 2 January Military parade is held in Revolution Square to mark 20th anniversary of Cuban revolution. Raul Castro presides and gives a speech highly critical of the United States.
- Fidel Castro and Raul Castro attend reception for all delegations visiting Cuba for the 20th anniversary celebration.
- 3 January Cuban Ambassador to Vietnam Melba Hernandez addresses national television audience in Hanoi, and expresses Cuba's support for the Vietnamese cause.
- Fidel Castro meets with Soviet Politburo member Romanov who is visiting Cuba for the 20th anniversary celebration.
- 4 January Fidel Castro, interviewed by the Czechoslovak magazine International, says success of the Cuban revolution is evidence of the vitality of Marxism-Leninism.

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- 5 January Armed Forces Minister, Army General Raul Castro, meets with South Yemen military delegation led by Col. Ali Ahmad Nasir, who is in Cuba for the 20th anniversary celebration.
- Party Secretariat member Antonio Perez Herrero meets with visiting Congolese military delegation.
- Raul Castro meets with Sao Tome Defense Minister, Maj. Daniel Lima Daio, in Havana.
- 6 January Raul Castro meets in Havana with Captain Fikre-Selassie Wodgeress, Secretary General of PMAC, the ruling council of Ethiopia.
- 7-9 January UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim visits Cuba. He is met by Fidel Castro, with whom he visits the Isle of Youth. This is the first visit of a UN Secretary General since the October 1962 missile crisis.
- 8 January Cuban Culture Minister Armando Hart and delegation arrive in Budapest, Hungary.
- Division General Senen Casas Requeiro meets with Tanzanian military delegation visiting Cuba.
- 9 January Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca issues a statement in support of Vietnam's position and condemns China's military buildup on Vietnam's border.
- 10 January Cuban military magazine Verde Olivo carries article highly critical of China.
- 10-21 January Ramon Castro tours agricultural installations in Iraq.
- 11 January Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca sends a message to Kampuchean Foreign Ministry, saying Cuba will reopen its embassy in Phnom Penh.

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11 January Fidel Castro sends congratulatory message to Heng Samrin, Chairman of Kampuchean National United Front, on "their great victory."

Union of Young Communists delegation headed by Osvaldo Castro arrives in Afghanistan at invitation of Afghan Youth Organization.

13 January Cuban UN Ambassador Raul Roa denounces the Pol Pot regime and attacks Prince Sihanouk.

16 January In Un Security Council, Cuban Ambassador Roa scores "Chinese alliance with imperialists."

17 January At dinner in Malmierca's honor, Yugoslav Foreign Secretary condemns "any foreign interference in other nation's affairs."

17-20 January Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca visits Belgrade, Yugoslavia to discuss nonaligned matters.

18 January The New China News Agency announces that Cuba and China have signed 1979 trade protocol in Beijing. German Amado Blanco, Cuban Vice Minister of Foreign Trade signs for Cuba. The Cuban press makes no mention of this event.

19 January In Hanoi, Cuban Ambassador to Vietnam Hernandez meets with her Kampuchean counterpart, Ambassador Chea Soth.

German Amado Blanco, heading a Cuban trade delegation, arrives in Pyongyang, North Korea.

21-28 January Ramon Castro tours agricultural enterprises in Romania.

22 January Cuba and Togo announce the establishment of diplomatic relations.

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- 22 January Cuban Ambassador to Bulgaria Jose Alvarez Bravo heads a delegation to the 14th Palestinian National Council meeting in Damascus and meets with PLO leader Yasir Arafat.
- 23 January Cuban Ambassador to Bangladesh Jose Lopez Sanchez meets with President Major General Siawz Rahman to discuss forthcoming non-aligned summit.
- 23-26 January Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca visits East Germany. He meets with his counterpart Oskar Fisher, party leader Erich Honecker, and Premier Willi Stoph.
- 23-27 January Specialists of the member countries of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee meet in Havana for planning sessions.
- 23-28 January Angolan President Neto arrives in Cuba for a private visit. He is met by Fidel Castro, with whom he tours the Isle of Youth and Cienfuegos. This is Neto's third visit to Cuba.
- 24 January Spain and Cuba sign five-year trade agreement in Madrid. Signing for Cuba is Vice Minister of Foreign Trade Ricardo Cabrizas.
- Cuban Foreign Trade Minister Marcelo Fernandez Font meets with Roberto De Almeida, Angolan Foreign Trade Minister in Havana.
- 25 January Cuban Vice President for Foreign Affairs Carlos Rafael Rodriguez meets with Angolan Foreign Minister Paulo Jorge in Havana.
- 26-29 January Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca pays official visit to Poland. He meets with party leader Edward Gierek to discuss the scheduled nonaligned summit.
- Division General Senen Casas Regueiro meets in Havana with Admiral Rassokho, Oceanography Chief of USSR Defense Ministry.

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26-29 January Cuban Vice Minister of Foreign Trade Cabrizas visits Portugal to attend Cuban-Portuguese Mixed Commission meeting.

28 January Fidel Castro presides over military review at General Maximo Gomez Academy in Havana in honor of Jose Marti Column 2 of the rebel army.

29 January Cuban Foreign Minister Malmierca arrives in Maputo, Mozambique to attend nonaligned movement's Coordinating Bureau meeting, in session until 2 February.

Eleven former prisoners in Cuban jails for "crimes against the state" leave for the United States.

30 January The Cuban Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (DCR) and the Peoples Defense Committee (CTP) of South Yemen sign a two-year cooperation agreement.

This information is all Unclassified.

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Sources of Copyrighted Photographs

Page 15 Kingston, Jamaica Daily Gleaner, 16 December 1976 (Seaga)

Page 15 Kingston, Jamaica Daily Gleaner, 15 August 1977 (Shearer)

Page 17 Kingston, Jamaica Daily Gleaner, 24 January 1979 (Cartoon)

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